



More than 12 leave days left?

Luxembourg, 7/12/2021

Union Syndicale Fédérale Luxembourg asks DG HR to extend until 31 March 2022 the possibility to take them

During this second year of pandemic, several among you did not have the opportunity to use all the leave days at your disposal.

Although the transport situation was more favourable in 2021 compared to the previous year, health measures in force (quarantine or travel restrictions) as well as constraints regarding the rules on presence in the office have had an important impact on the decision of many colleagues to limit their leave to the strict minimum.

As the end of the year is approaching and we are in the midst of a fourth wave of COVID-19, HR sends reminders to colleagues who have more than 12 days of remaining leave, encouraging them to reduce any excess, the line being a strict application of the maximum 12 leave days that staff can automatically transfer to the following year, and that derogations invoking service reasons would be closely scrutinised.

However, as noted above, during a pandemic, **the reasons for such an accumulation of unused days of leave may go beyond mere reasons of service.**

According to **Union Syndicale Fédérale Luxembourg**, DG HR should adopt **a more flexible approach, also taking into account the human factor and the psychological condition of its staff**, which could have discouraged it from using all days of leave available during 2021.

For a majority of colleagues, **leave means the possibility to travel and spend time with their family and friends in their home country.** The same logic applies to those wishing to travel to a destination other than the country of origin during their leave: many people have family ties in places other than their country of origin.

However, the current reality is that for much of 2021, **non-essential travel to many countries was strongly discouraged**, while the low availability of flights discouraged many colleagues from travelling.

Union Syndicale Fédérale Luxembourg considers unacceptable that staff be forced to take leave at the place of work if they encounter difficulties to travel to meet their family or elsewhere abroad.

Union Syndicale Fédérale Luxembourg also considers that **the current exceptional circumstances of COVID-19 require exceptional measures.**

For these reasons, **Union Syndicale Fédérale Luxembourg** asks DG HR and individual DGs to **apply maximum flexibility when examining derogations from the 12-day rule for service reasons.**

Union Syndicale Fédérale Luxembourg also asks DG HR to **extend until 31 March 2022 the possibility for staff to take leave in excess of the 12 days that can normally be transferred.**

This is not such an extraordinary request given the current context of a further deterioration in the sanitary situation at the end of the year and the fact that it was not so long ago that, under normal circumstances, it was possible to take excess leave until 31 January of the following year.

Union Syndicale Fédérale Luxembourg will remain **attentive to developments** on this issue and, as always, encourages staff to submit their comments

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